224 deer were also more effectively hunted in groups, not only because of the advantages of the ambush, but because an arrow wound is frequently not fatal, especially at longer range, and, if there are two or three hunters, the possibilities of successfully dispatching the animals are increased.

226 **Fishing**

Fishing was an economic activity definitely secondary to hunting, although as we will see later, the circumstances of acculturation have changed one large section of the tribe to a group which relies primarily on fish for proteins. The 361 .23 aboriginal Mundurucú generally built their villages in places several hours inland from the nearest navigable streams. Thus their defensive position was improved while in no way impairing their attacking power. This settlement pattern was well adapted to a warrior society, but removed them from the best [226] fishing sites. The small streams within easy reach of the villages yielded only smaller species of fish and in limited quantity. That the Mundurucú relied little on the water system for food or transportation is shown by the fact that only in recent times has the dugout canoe been adopted on even a small scale. The usual modern Mundurucú canoe is of the double ended plank type made by the Brazilians and sold to the Indians by the rubber traders. In pre-contact times, the only water craft used was the bark canoe of the type described by Von den Steinen on the upper Xingú River.[8] Not even this canoe was native to the Mundurucú for they acknowl-

8. Steinen, 1894, pp. 222-225.

edge it to have been learned from their Tupian neighbors, the Apiaca. In early times, this bark canoe was used only to cross large streams when on a war expedition. Small streams were crossed either on fallen logs or by swimming. Today, canoes are in greater use, but very few are owned among these Mundurucú of the savannahs.

An additional factor limiting fishing is that the annual rains cause the rivers to overflow their banks allowing the fish to disperse through the forest in search of fallen berries and fruits. During this season, fishing is very difficult throughout the entire rain forest region, even for those people having canoes. For the Mundurucú, who had to fish from the river banks, it was a sheer impossibility. The Indians of the present village of Cabruá complain that they have no canoes and that to fish during the rainy season would involve wading through the igapó, or flooded forest, impractical due to poisonous and constrictor water snakes, covered roots and logs, and the virtual assurance of failure.

Dry season fishing was done by two means. The first of these was to fish from the river bank with bow and arrow. To facilitate this technique, platforms were often built on the limbs of trees overhanging the water. The Mundurucú have great skill in fishing with the bow and arrow, and it is still preferred to the hook and line, which was introduced by the whites and is only used during the rainy season when the fish are scarcer and at a greater depth.

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values were supernaturally reinforced by their possession of the sacred trumpets, or *karökö*. Each village maintained a set of three of these instruments, and they were absolutely taboo to the eyes of the women, who were thought to have once owned them.

Political controls were not elaborate. Each village had a chief, whose position was bolstered by the fact that his sons were generally exempt from the matrilocal residence rule. Although there were no patterns of continuous supravillage leadership, relations between communities were very close and involved intermarriage and joint participation in ceremonies and warfare. Tribal feeling was highly developed and conflict between villages was totally absent.

THE CONDUCT OF WARFARE

Mundurucú warfare was distinguished by a complete lack of any defensive psychology, and the Mundurucú looked upon themselves as aggressors and victors. They have been described as " . . . one of the most valorous and feared [tribes] of all the hinterland of Amazons" (Almeida Serra 1869:4), while, on the other hand, the French explorer Henri Coudreau (1897:142) wrote in righteous indignation that, "The Mundurucú practice neither justice, nor duel, nor warfare, but only assassination." This harsh judgment seems not to fit the people who extended my wife and me kindness and hospitality, and who were invariably soft-spoken, humorous, and gentle. But these same gentle people spoke at length and with great animation of their former prowess as warriors and of expeditions against other tribes in which the enemy men and women were killed and decapitated and their children stolen. Nothing about their own culture interested the Mundurucú as much as the extinct but still remembered patterns of warfare, and the older men were zealous informants on that subject.

The human world was seen by the Mundurucú to consist of two distinct spheres; there were "people" or Mundurucú, and *pariwat*, a term referring to any non-Mundurucú human. With the exception of the neighboring Apiacá Indians and the white men, all pariwat were enemies. An enemy was not merely a person to be guarded against but was a proper object of attack, and the Mundurucú pursued this end with extraordinary vigor and stamina. Before 1795 they attacked Santarém and ranged near the mouth of the Amazon to strike the fort of Gurupá. Hartt (1885:116) stated that Mundurucú war parties had penetrated into the eastern part of the province of Maranhão, where they were beaten back by "Apinagés."[2] Tocantins (1877:98) claimed that the Mundurucú knew the city of Cuyabá in Mato Grosso, and informants told of raids as far as the upper waters of the Juruena, São Manoel, and Madeira Rivers. These expeditions apparently carried the warriors over 500 miles from home and must have involved trips of well over 1,000 miles. And the Mundurucú traveled solely by foot; bark canoes were made and used only for the purpose of crossing large streams. These were exceptional journeys, but

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culture, the planting and use of cotton were introduced after their contact with the whites, and their only watercraft were bark canoes of the type the German ethnologist Karl von den Steinen saw in the upper Xingú.[4] The moiety-phratry-clan system of Mundurucú social organization is considerably more complex than most Tupian societies, and the system of kinship nomenclature is correspondingly divergent. Mundurucú religion follows the broad outlines of supernatural beliefs and rites of the area, but there are significant differences in mythology.

These are only a few points of dissimilarity between the Mundurucú and the other Tupian tribes of the coast and lower Amazon region, but when considered with the linguistic data, they are sufficient to suggest a considerable period of independent development. There are also fundamental points of similarity: subsistence techniques are much akin to those found throughout the tropical-forest region of South America, and the Mundurucú are a village-dwelling people. And in common with other tribes of the area, class stratification is absent, political controls are simple, and the fundamental organization of the society is established along lines of kinship.

Certain characteristics lead me to suspect that the Mundurucú may have originally dwelled south of their present habitat. Their lack of cotton and the dug-out canoe and the absence of cannibalism and alcoholic beverages suggest that they may have come from the Planalto de Mato Grosso. Also, although they were and are industrious horticulturalists, their supernatural beliefs and ceremonies are only marginally concerned with cultivation; their major emphasis in ritual is on hunting. One other factor suggests a more southerly origin. The traditional Mundurucú villages were situated in the northernmost savannah coun-

[4] Steinen, 1894, pp. 222–223.

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226 streams rely primarily upon fish for protein. The savannah villages are several hours inland from the nearest navi- [361] gable streams. This settlement pattern was well adapted to the defensive requirements of a warrior society, but it removed the communities from the best fishing sites. The narrow, shallow streams within easy reach of the villages yield only smaller species of fish and in limited quantities.

177 The Mundurucú relied little on the river system for food or transportation in times past, as is shown by the 501 fact that only in recent years has the dugout canoe been adopted on even a small scale. The modern Mundurucú canoe is usually of the double ended plank type made by the Brazilians and sold to the Indians by the rubber traders; before contact with the whites the only water craft used was the bark canoe. Not even this canoe, however, was native to the Mundurucú for they acknowledge having acquired it from their Tupian-speaking neighbors, the Apiacá. In early times, the bark canoe was used only to cross large streams when the Indians were on war expeditions. Small streams were crossed either on fallen logs or by swimming. Today, canoes are in greater use, but very few are owned among the Mundurucú of the savannahs, despite their annual dry-season residence on large streams. Only two men in the village of Cabruá owned canoes and no one in Cabitutú had one.

226 An additional factor limiting fishing is that the annual [132] rains cause the rivers to overflow their banks, allowing the fish to disperse through the flooded forest where they feed on fallen berries and fruits. During this season, fishing is difficult in the rain-forest region, even for people having canoes. For the Mundurucú, who have to fish with bow and arrow from the river banks, it is almost impossible. The modern residents of Cabruá say that their lack of canoes would make it necessary for them during

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and they too abandoned the annual return to the savannahs. The material prosperity of these emigrants lured more of their brethren into increased rubber collection, and greater numbers of Indians began to establish permanent residences on the river banks. There is little doubt that the same centrifugal tendencies that are currently operating in the remaining savannah communities did much to hasten the migration. In time, small villages were established on the Cururú River.

Those who tapped rubber on the Cururú tended, as the people of Cabruá today, to choose avenues near their close kinsmen and house mates. Unmarried sons worked with their fathers, and sons-in-law also had contiguous rubber trails; other relatives worked nearby if it was convenient. When these families shifted to permanent occupancy of the river shores, they maintained these affiliations and either lived in the same dwelling or built adjacent but separate houses. Other persons who had rubber avenues in the vicinity migrated later and chose to settle in these little hamlets. Although this might force them to walk for thirty or forty-five minutes to their daily labors, the presence of others afforded the opportunity to share in farinha-making equipment and, of greater importance, provided them with the companionship and social intercourse to which village life had accustomed them.

Other migrants to the Cururú settled in these villages also, but their rubber avenues were too far away to allow daily commuting, and they had to follow the familiar pattern of village residence in the rainy season and temporary habitation of the rubber avenue during the dry summer. This was no great inconvenience, because these dry-season houses were usually within a few hours of the village and were easily accessible by water. The benefits of water transportation could only be enjoyed if one had a canoe,

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of course, but that could be obtained in trade with the mission if one worked hard.

The villages grew by increments and with no special order. The original houses were of the sort that the Mundurucú usually erected in their rubber avenues. These had a square floor plan, and, when graced with walls, usually were made of straw or wattle and daub in the manner characteristic of those of the Brazilian rubber collectors. Later additions to the village followed this design and furthered the already drastic alteration of the traditional Mundurucú settlement by being built in any convenient space in the village clearing, with no reference to an over-all village plan. Today, the usual Mundurucú village on the Cururú consists of from three to eleven square wattle-and-daub houses having no special arrangement except that all face toward the river.

The circumstances of the migration induced other changes in village organization. Since the first permanent settlers on the Cururú came in small groups of one to three nuclear families, it was no longer possible to carry out the old coöperative economic organization; this is essentially the same problem faced by the contemporary campineiros during the rubber season. There were not enough men in any one place to carry on the almost daily collective hunts, but the proximity of the river and the stable food supply it offered compensated for this. Timbó-fishing trips still required a concentration of forces, but, since they occurred only periodically during the dry season, the gatherings could be arranged by sending invitations abroad. Everyday bow-and-arrow fishing required only two men, one to handle the canoe and the other to shoot the fish. If fishing was done from the banks, one man was adequate to the task. Thus, the new economic circumstances of their lives combined with the nature of the migration itself to decrease the dependency of the individual on a large group.